

Road View Farm Kitchen
Near Tunstalls
New Kent County
Virginia

HABS No. VA 97
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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORIC AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of Virginia

Historic American Buildings Survey

Prepared at Washington Office

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ROAD VIEW FARM KITCHEN

Owner: W. L. Evelyn, Tunstall, Virginia.

Date of Erection: c. Before Civil War, or probably from
the Reconstruction Days after the
Civil War.

Architect: Unknown

Builder: Unknown

Present Condition: See photographs following.

Number of Stories: 1 story with attic

Materials of Construction:

Other Existing Records:

Additional Data: The owner, Mr. Evelyn, purchased the property from John Merriman who inherited it from his mother. The structure shows no evidence of alterations or additions. The main house which this kitchen served was 1½ story frame with brick foundation walls. This building was destroyed by fire. According to Mr. Evelyn's description it seems that the main house was Early Republic type.

(A.A. Davis, Arch. Foreman)

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ROAD VIEW FARM KITCHEN

This building is evidently of 19th century construction. From the evidence of the cut nails used and the small size of the timber scantlings, the writer would say it was about 100 years old. It is also his opinion that this type of kitchen, with chimney entirely of wood, was more common than might be expected from the rarity of examples extant. As a matter of fact, it is thought that this is a unique survival. This may have been a survival of a primitive building type, such as those buildings known to have had wood chimneys in the 17th century. As late as the middle of the 18th century, it was directed that the wood chimneys in the town of York should be removed and no new ones built.

The Road View Farm Kitchen is a small gabled structure, boarded vertically on the exterior. The boarding is secured to the sill, intermediate member and plate. The roof is lathed and shingled. There is no evidence as to the original means of closing the window openings, but it is assumed from the primitive character that no glazing was used, only wood shutters. The floor is tamped earth.

The most interesting feature of the building is the wood chimney. This is contrived by leaving the east bay of the second floor open and erecting a sloping partition from the top of the first timber of the floor construction to the apex of the roof. Therefore, the throat of the fire place is formed by the underside of the gable itself and by the east wall of the building and the sloping partition abovementioned. Above the roof, the chimney appears as a small wood box, lacking the top. The only precaution seen to prevent fire was an area lathed for the reception of a coat of clay, immediately above the fire place. It extended from the intermediate to the plate. Below the intermediate there was no sign of lathing or plastering, but this area of the boarding was free from soot and it is probable that a cast iron fire-back protected this portion of the wall. To prevent sparks from resting on the top of the plate and igniting it, a clay wash covered the top of this timber.

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It is said that buckets of water were kept hanging in the kitchen and a ladder placed in readiness against the east wall to put out fires should they occur, and from evidence at the building it would show that they appeared at least twice.

Thomas T. Waterman

Thomas T. Waterman.

July 7, 1936.